

NUMBERS

THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE BIBLE

THE NAME: "NUMBERS"

- * The name of the book comes from the two censuses taken of the Israelites.
- * CENSUS 1 (at Mt. Sinai): While the Israelites were preparing for their journey and entry into the promise land, Moses took a census of all the tribes, primarily to see how many men are available and in shape for military service. (Numbers 1)
- * CENSUS 2 (in the Plains of Moab): Before the book of Numbers ends, Moses again conducts a census of the Generation that grew up in the Wilderness (Numbers 36)
- * Censuses were taken to quantify the human and natural resources available for the economic and governmental affairs, including military service (Num. 1:2-3; 26:2-4), religious duties (Num. 4:2-3, 22-23), taxation (Num. 3:40-48), and agriculture (Num. 26:53-54).

AUTHORSHIP & FACTS

Moses is traditionally believed to be the Author of Numbers, which is part of the Torah or Pentateuch (The 5 books of Moses)

DATE WRITTEN: 1440-1410 BC

CHAPTERS: 36

VERSES: 1,288

HISTORICAL TIME PERIOD

- * Numbers is written some 13 months after the Exodus (leaving Egypt).
- * The Book of Numbers covers around 39 years of the journey of Israelites in the Wilderness.
- * Numbers 1:1 - 10:11 covers 21 days
- * Numbers 10:1 - 33:38 covers about 38 years

- * Israel in **Sinai** Prepares to Enter the Land (1:1–10:10)
- * Marching from Sinai to Kadesh Barnea (10:11–12:16)
- * Forty Years near **Kadesh Barnea** (13:1–19:22)
- * Marching from Kadesh to the Plains of Moab (20:1–21:35)
- * Israel in the **Plains of Moab** (22:1–36:13)

REFERENCES OF INCIDENTS IN OTHER BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

- * Joshua and Caleb alone among the twelve spies encouraged Israel to take possession of the land ([Numbers 13-14](#); [Joshua 14:7](#))
- * The
- * Moses struck a rock and water spouted forth ([Numbers 20:11](#); [Psalm 106:32](#))
- * Moses lifted up a bronze serpent on a pole so that believing Israelites might be healed of their snake bites ([Numbers 21:6-9](#); [John 3:14](#))
- * Balaam was rebuked by his donkey ([Numbers 22:21-34](#); [Revelation 2:14](#)). Peter compares false teachers to Balaam, "who loved the wages of wickedness" ([2 Peter 2:15](#)). Jude echoes this sentiment, associating Balaam with the selling of one's soul for financial gain ([Jude 1:11](#)). Finally, Jesus speaks of Balaam when He warns [the church in Pergamum](#) of their sin: "There are some among you who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin so that they ate food sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality" ([Revelation 2:14](#)).

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

- * The task before the Israelites is to take possession of the Promised Land.
- * The people are counted and preparations are made for resuming their march.
- * The consistent "murmuring" of the Israelites results in God destroying approximately 15,000 of them through various means.
- * They arrive at the borders of Canaan and send spies into the land.
- * Upon hearing the spies' fearful report concerning the conditions in Canaan, the Israelites refuse to take possession of it.
- * God condemns them to death in the wilderness until a new generation can grow up and carry out the task.
- * The book ends with the new generation of Israelites in the Plain of Moab ready for the crossing of the Jordan River.^[4]

7 MURMURINGS & OUTCOMES

- * *The book of Numbers is organized around 7 Incidents of grumbling and complaining. Each of these murmurings is met with a judgment from God.*
- * **Philippians 2:14-16** - *Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.*

1. Murmur about Hardship (Num. 11:1-3).

- * "fire from the LORD...consumed the outskirts of the camp" (11:1).

2. Murmur about Food (Meat) (Num. 11:4-15)

- * They were "struck...with a very severe plague" (11:33).

3. Murmur about Moses' leadership (Num. 12)

- * A week's worth of leprosy for Miriam (12:1-15).

7 MURMURINGS & OUTCOMES

4. Murmur about Entering the Promised Land (Num. 13-14)

- * The people decide to appoint a new leader and head back to Egypt (14:4),
- * God gives them what they want and they spend the next 40 years wandering and eventually dying, in the wilderness (14:34-35).

5. Murmur against Moses' and Aaron's leadership (Num. 16)

- * Korah's attempted mutiny landed him and his people in Sheol (16:1-33).

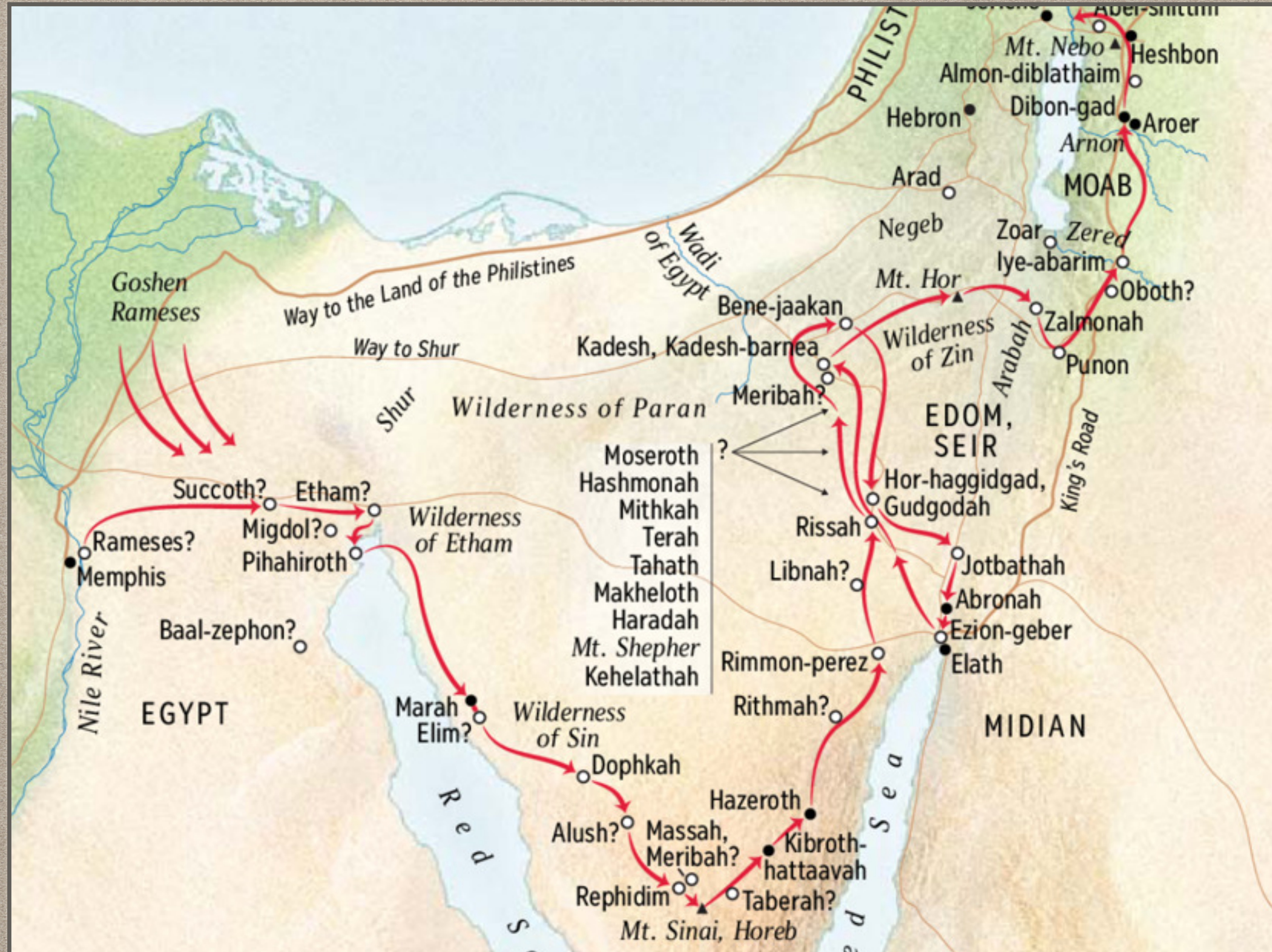
6. Murmur for Water (Num. 20:1-13)

- * Finally, when he misrepresented God, Moses' harsh action of striking the rock twice kept him out of the promised land (20:1-13).

7. Murmur for bread and water (Num. 21:4-9).

- * the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.

THE WANDERING NUMBERS 32:13



THE WASTED LIFE (NUMBERS 14:13



THE WICKED LIFE NUMBERS 25:1-9



OUTLINE OF NUMBERS

I. Israel Preparing at Sinai, 1:1-10:10

- * **A. The Census of the People, 1:1-4:49**
 1. The population of the tribes, 1:1-54
 2. The position of the tribes in camp and on march, 2:1-34
 3. The place of the Levites, 3:1-4:49
- * **B. The Sanctification of the People, 5:1-10:10**
 1. By separation from defiling things, 5:1-31
 2. By taking a Nazirite vow, 6:1-27
 3. By the offerings of the leaders, 7:1-89
 4. By the setting apart of the Levites, 8:1-26
 5. By observing the first annual Passover, 9:1-14
 6. By being led by God, 9:15-10:10

II. Israel Marching to Kadesh-barnea, 10:11-12:16

- * **A. The March Begun, 10:11-36**
- * **B. The Murmurings Begun, 11:1-12:16**
 1. The murmuring of the people (the seventy elders and the quail), 11:1-35
 2. The murmuring of Miriam and Aaron (the leprosy of Miriam), 12:1-16

OUTLINE OF NUMBERS

III. Israel at Kadesh-barnea, 13:1-20:13

* **A. The Defiance of God, 13:1-14:45**

1. The reconnaissance and report of the spies, 13:1-33
2. The reaction and judgment of the people, 14:1-45

* **B. The Discipline from God, 15:1-20:13**

1. Miscellaneous laws concerning offerings, Sabbath-breaking, and garment tassels, 15:1-41
2. The rebellion of Korah, 16:1-50
3. Validation of the Aaronic priesthood: Aaron's rod that budded, 17:1-13
4. The duties and support of the Levites, 18:1-32
5. The red heifer sacrifice, 19:1-22
6. The sin of Moses, 20:1-13

IV. Israel Marching to Moab, 20:14-21:35

* **A. The Defiance of Edom, 20:14-22**

* **B. The Death of Aaron, 20:23-29**

* **C. The Defeat of Arad, 21:1-3**

* **D. The Discipline of Israel: the Bronze Serpent, 21:4-9**

* **E. The Defeat of Sihon and Og, 21:10-35**